

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-12 and 14-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3, 6, 8-12, 14, 15 and 18-21 are amended and claims 4 and 13 are cancelled. Support for the amendments to claims 1-3, 6, 8-12, 14, 15 and 18-21 can be found in the claims as filed. No new matter is added. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 16 and 17 are allowed, and that claims 3-9, 11, 20 and 21 contain allowable subject matter.

Objection to the Claims

The Office Action objects to claims 3-5, 9, 10 and 18-21. Claims 3, 9, 10, 18, 19 and 21 are amended to obviate the objection. Further amendments are also made to the claims to correct informalities. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

A. Yashiro

The Office Action rejects claims 12-15 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 5,745,824 to Yashiro ("Yashiro"). Claim 13 is cancelled, rendering the rejection moot as to that claim. As to the remaining claims, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 12 and 15 are directed to methods of using a process cartridge, including "detachably attaching a first cartridge to an accommodating portion of a second cartridge to form a process cartridge . . . the accommodating portion being provided in a lower portion of the second cartridge extending substantially horizontally away from the photosensitive member, such that the first cartridge is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photosensitive member when the first cartridge is attached to the

accommodating portion." Claim 19 is similarly directed to a method of using a process cartridge, including "detachably attaching a developer cartridge to an accommodating portion of the case ... the accommodating portion being provided in a lower portion of the case of the photosensitive member cartridge extending substantially horizontally away from the photosensitive member, such that the developer cartridge is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photosensitive member when the developer cartridge is attached to the accommodating portion." Yashiro does not disclose such methods.

The Office Action asserts that Yashiro discloses a method of using a process cartridge including attaching a first cartridge to an accommodating portion of a second cartridge. *See* Office Action, page 4, paragraphs 5-6. However, the alleged accommodating portion of the cartridge of Yashiro is not provided in a lower portion of the second cartridge extending substantially horizontally away from a photosensitive member, such that the first cartridge is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photosensitive member when the first cartridge is attached to the accommodating portion, as recited in claims 12 and 15, and similarly recited in claim 19.

In Yashiro, a photosensitive drum unit 100 and a developing unit 200 can be attached. *See* Yashiro, column 4, lines 51-53 and FIG. 2(a). The Office Action alleges specifically that the U-shaped groove 107d of the photosensitive drum unit 100 is an accommodating portion. *See* Office Action, page 4, paragraphs 5-6. However, even if the groove 107d of Yashiro were construed to be an accommodating portion, the groove 107d does not extend "substantially horizontally away" from the photosensitive drum 104, as provided in claims 12, 15 and 19. Rather, the groove 107d extends above and toward the photosensitive drum 104. *See* Yashiro, FIG. 2(a). Moreover, the developing unit 200 is not "substantially above" the groove 107d when the photosensitive drum unit 100 and developing unit 200 are attached, as

provided in claims 12, 15 and 19. Instead, the developing unit 200 is adjacent to the photosensitive drum unit 100 when the two are attached -- no portion of the developing unit 200 is substantially above the groove 107d. *See* Yashiro, FIG. 2(a).

As Yashiro does not teach or suggest a method of using a process cartridge in which an accommodating portion of a cartridge is provided in a lower portion of that cartridge extending substantially horizontally away from a photosensitive member, such that another cartridge is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photosensitive member when the two cartridges are attached, Yashiro does not teach or suggest the methods of claims 12, 15 and 19.

Claims 12, 15 and 19 are not anticipated by Yashiro. Claim 14 depends from claim 12, and thus also is not anticipated by Yashiro. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Takahashi

The Office Action rejects claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,160,964 to Takahashi et al. ("Takahashi"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 18 is amended to depend from and include all of the limitations of claim 16, which the Office Action indicates is allowed. Thus, claim 18 is allowable. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 06-186798 to Isobe et al. ("Isobe") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,585,889 to Shishido et al. ("Shishido"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of using a process cartridge, including "detachably attaching a developer cartridge to an accommodating portion of a photosensitive member cartridge to form a process unit, the photosensitive member cartridge including a

photosensitive member, the developer cartridge including a developer roller that dispenses developer, and the accommodating portion being provided in a lower portion of the photosensitive member cartridge extending substantially horizontally away from the photosensitive member, such that the developer cartridge is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photosensitive member when the developer cartridge is attached to the accommodating portion." Isobe does not teach or suggest such a method. Shishido does not remedy the deficiencies of Isobe.

The Office Action asserts that Isobe discloses a method of using a process cartridge including attaching a developer cartridge to an accommodating portion of a photosensitive member cartridge to form a process unit. *See* Office Action, page 6, paragraph 10. The Office Action concedes that Isobe does not disclose attaching the process unit to an image forming apparatus from the front face of the apparatus, but asserts that it would have been obvious in view of Shishido to modify the direction of attachment of the process unit of Isobe so that the process unit is attached at a front face of the image forming apparatus. *See* Office Action, page 6, paragraph 10. Notwithstanding these assertions, the combination of Isobe and Shishido does not teach or suggest the method of claim 1.

In Isobe, a process cartridge B includes development means 10, cleaning means 11 and a photoconductor drum 7. *See* Isobe, FIG. 2. The Office Action does not identify the part in the process cartridge B that allegedly corresponds to the accommodating portion of claim 1, but it is plain that no part of the cleaning means 11 (which the Office Action alleges corresponds to the photosensitive member cartridge of claim 1) includes an accommodating portion provided in a lower portion of the cleaning means 11 extending substantially horizontally away from the photoconductor drum 7, such that the development means 10 (which the Office Action alleges corresponds to the developer cartridge of claim 1) is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photoconductor drum 7

when the development means 10 and the cleaning means 11 are attached. *See* Isobe, FIG. 2. Moreover, there is no indication in Isobe that the development means 10 and the cleaning means 11 are "detachably attached." Accordingly, Isobe does not teach or suggest "detachably attaching a developer cartridge to an accommodating portion of a photosensitive member cartridge," as recited in claim 1.

Shishido does not remedy the deficiencies of Isobe. Shishido, like Isobe, discloses a process cartridge 3 including a developing station 7, a cleaning station 15 and a photosensitive drum 4. *See* Shishido, column 6, lines 57-64 and FIG. 3. However, no part of the cleaning station 15 includes an accommodating portion provided in a lower portion of the cleaning station 15 extending substantially horizontally away from the photosensitive drum 4, such that the developing station 7 is substantially above the accommodating portion and adjacent to the photosensitive drum 4 when the developing station 7 and the cleaning station 15 are attached. *See* Shishido, FIG. 3. Further, there is no teaching in Shishido that the developing station 7 and the cleaning station 15 are "detachably attached." Accordingly, Shishido does not teach or suggest "detachably attaching a developer cartridge to an accommodating portion of a photosensitive member cartridge," as recited in claim 1.

As neither Isobe nor Shishido teaches or suggests "detachably attaching a developer cartridge to an accommodating portion of a photosensitive member cartridge," as recited in claim 1, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made.

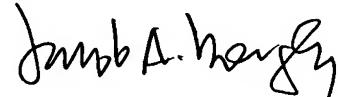
Claim 1 would not have been rendered obvious by Isobe in view of Shishido. Claims 2 and 10 depend from claim 1, and thus also would not have been rendered obvious by the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3, 5-12 and 14-21 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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